Feb. 3 - 4 1999

Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association

Executive Notes

Your Provincial Executive Council met on February 3 and 4 in St. John's and Joint Council (Branch Presidents and Executive) on February 5 and 6. This issue of Executive Notes is designed to provide you with a summary of major decisions and discussions occurring at these meetings. For further information on these issues, please contact any member of Provincial Executive or the NLTA staff person as indicated.

Association Priorities

QUALITY OF WORK LIFE

Provincial Executive were provided with an update on recent meetings with officials from the Department of Education. These meetings dealt with curriculum issues, student support services, testing, classroom management, and teacher workload. The main point made by NLTA at these meetings is that these issues have to be addressed immediately and that the problems will not go away until they are addressed.

The obvious follow-up would have been a meeting with the new Minister of Education, Judy Foote. Due to the election call, however, this follow-up was not able to take place. When the election is over the President of NLTA will proceed with a meeting with the Minister. For further information contact Brendan Doyle, President, or Wayne Noseworthy, Executive Director.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESTRUCTURING

The Association has been pursuing activities in the area of special interest councils, branch responsibilities, leave for professional development, collaboration with other groups, technology and providing leadership. For further information contact Beverley Park or René Wicks, Professional Development Division.

RESPONDING TO THE MEMBERSHIP

There are and will continue to be concerns from the membership on various issues and these will be addressed as time and resources permit. At the present time the Association is dealing with the call for a province-wide vote. A great deal of preparation was necessary for a motion from the Placentia Branch for a province-wide vote. This proposal involves extensive changes to NLTA by-laws which were discussed at length by both Provincial Executive and Joint Council. A detailed costing of operating a new governance system is being prepared and will be forwarded to branches prior to Convention 1999. For further information contact Edward Hancock, Benefits and Economic Services Division, or Wayne Noseworthy, Executive Director.

TEACHER CERTIFICATION

The Ad Hoc Committee on Teacher Certification is in the process of developing a framework/guidelines for teacher certification. When this is completed it will be brought to the membership for input, feedback and suggestions. For further information contact Winston Carter or Mike Luedee, Co-chairs, Certification Review Committee, or Beverley Park, René Wicks, Professional Development Division.

Labrador Benefits Negotiations
A copy of the Opening Proposal for negotiations on the Labrador Benefits Package was sent to all Branch Presidents in Labrador as well as all school representatives for distribution to teachers. The proposals were presented to the Employer Negotiating Team at the first negotiating session in Goose Bay on January 26-27. Further negotiating sessions are scheduled for the week of March 8. For further information contact Edward Hancock or Perry Downey, Benefits and Economic Services Division.

Business from Standing Committees
After extensive discussion and deliberation, Provincial Executive made the following decisions and recommendations based on reports from the NLTA Standing Committees:

NLTA will inform school boards of Special Interest Council conference planning and request that members of the planning committees and council executive members be granted the necessary release time to attend the entire conference. This release time would be above and beyond the five professional development days referenced in the collective agreement. For further information contact Mike Luedee, Chair, Professional Issues in Teaching Committee, or Beverley Park, René Wicks, Professional Development Division.

The NLTA By-law V. Subsection B will be brought to Convention '99 with the following proposed amendment: *Life members may attend and speak at meetings of the Association, but not at meetings or portions of meetings relating to collective bargaining. They shall not be entitled to hold office in the Association, nor vote, nor be members of the Executive. Other privileges may be granted as per Association Policy. For further information contact Brendan Doyle, President, or Wayne Noseworthy, Executive Director.*

The guidelines and application procedures for the Allen Bishop Award will be reviewed by the Membership Benefits and Services Committee. For further information contact Winston Carter, Chair, Membership Benefits and Services Committee, or Lloyd Hobbs, Administrative Officer, Benefits and Economic Services.

An amended Legal Aid Policy was accepted by Provincial Executive and will be brought to Convention 1999 for approval. For further information contact Edward Hancock, Director of Benefits and Economic Services, or Wayne Noseworthy, Executive Director.

The proposed NLTA Budgets for 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 were accepted for presentation at Convention 1999. For further information contact Fred Douglas, Chair, Finance and Property Committee, or Jim Fox, NLTA Treasurer.

NLTA will investigate ways and means of informing junior teachers of the benefits of financial planning early in their careers. For further information contact Winston Carter, Chair, Membership Benefits and Services Committee, or Jim Fox, NLTA Treasurer.

The Auditor's Report for the NLTA, for the year ending August 31, 1998, was accepted for presentation to Convention 1999. For further information contact Jim Fox, NLTA Treasurer.

Joint Council

The following are action items and motions approved at the Joint Council meeting:

When and where it is practical, space will be provided on the agendas of the Biennial General Meetings, Joint Council Meetings, and any significant meetings of the NLTA for Professional Development issues and concerns. For further information contact Wayne Noseworthy, Executive Director, or Beverley Park, René Wicks, Professional Development Division.

The NLTA will contact the Department of Education requesting that a moratorium be placed on any reduction in teacher allocations, while a review of the current formula on teacher allocations is ongoing. For further information contact Brendan Doyle, President, or Wayne Noseworthy, Executive Director.

NLTA will call for an immediate halt to further implementation of "Pathways to Programming and Graduation", pending provision of necessary professional and personnel supports and government acting upon the recommendations of the NLTA position paper, "The Crisis in Student Support". NLTA will take this position publicly through the media and in consultation with the Department of Education, the Newfoundland and Labrador School Boards Association, individual school boards and directors, the Federation of School Councils, social workers, and Department of Justice officials. NLTA will communicate its position and provide a copy of "The Crisis in Student Support" to all teachers and initiate a process to obtain feedback from teachers on this matter. For further information contact Brendan Doyle, President, or Wayne Noseworthy, Executive Director.

In the event that the NLTA is unsuccessful in stopping the implementation of the "Pathways to Programming and Graduation", the NLTA President is empowered to call for an immediate halt when deemed necessary. For further information contact Brendan Doyle, President.

A committee of NLTA will be given the mandate to investigate and make recommendations re: the concerns of teachers on new building construction and remodelling of old buildings and make recommendations on how to deal with these concerns. A set of minimum parameters will be developed for new school construction and these parameters will be communicated to communities targeted for new school construction. For further information contact Wayne Noseworthy, Executive Director.

Upon the request from a branch president, the NLTA President will contact the appropriate director or assistant director of personnel to lobby for a more reasonable and standardized utilization of Articles 18.03 and 18.08 of the Provincial Collective Agreement. For further information contact Brendan Doyle, President.

Other Business

Seven pre-retirement seminars will be held in accordance with Association policy during the Fall of 1999. Three seminars will be held in St. John's and the others in Gander, Corner Brook, Stephenville, and Grand Falls-Windsor. Dates and sites will be announced. For further information contact the Benefits and Economic Services Division.

The theme for the 1999 BGM will be: "Building on the Past Shaping the Future". For further information contactWayne Noseworthy, Executive Director.

NLTA will offer to host the 2002 Canadian Teachers' Federation Annual General Meeting in this province. For further information, contact Wayne Noseworthy, Executive Director.

A name change was approved for the Bonavista-Port Union-King's Cove Branch. The name is now the Landfall Branch. For further information contact Geralyn Costello, Assistant to the President.

The employment of substitute teachers was raised as an issue for discussion. It was referred to the staff of Benefits and Economic Services Division to make contact with the President of the School Administrators Council regarding NLTA policy in this area. For further information contact Perry Downey, Benefits and Economic Services Division.

The Association will investigate the possibility of providing some type of training or orientation sessions for new branch presidents. For further information contact Wayne Noseworthy, Executive Director.

Information will be prepared and sent to all teachers concerning RRSP room and the effect of the integration formula in the TPP which will increase RRSP room for 1999. For further information contact Edward Hancock, Benefits and Economic Services.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of Provincial Executive is scheduled for March 5 and 6 in St. John's. For further information contact Geralyn Costello Assistant to the President.